



NEWS RELEASE

COUNCILMEMBER MARTI EMERALD

Seventh District

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For Immediate Release

Contact: Geni Cavitt
Phone: 619-236-6677
E-mail: gcavitt@sandiego.gov

EMERALD CALLS ETHICS RULING A VICTORY

San Diego City Councilmember Marti Emerald is pleased with the unanimous decision by the San Diego Ethics Commission clearing her on charges that she deliberately violated the city's Ethics code.

The Ethics Commission staff accused Councilmember Emerald of deliberately concealing two campaign debts after her November 2008 election win. The bills totaled \$50,000.

"This was the whole reason for our Ethics Commission hearing," said Emerald. "We reported to the Ethics Commission more than a year ago that we made two accounting errors and worked with staff to correct them. But the staff later claimed the mistakes were deliberate and refused to negotiate with us. We had no choice but to take our case directly to the Commission for an Administrative hearing."

After two days and 10 hours of testimony, the five Ethics Commissioners agreed with Councilmember Emerald. During televised deliberations, seen live on City-TV, all five Commissioners spoke directly to the issue of concealment, with each one stating that there was no evidence of intent to conceal. Instead, the Commissioners concluded the violations were inadvertent errors. The Commissioners also said the Emerald Campaign Committee cooperated fully with the investigation.

The Councilmember will pay a \$3000 fine for the inadvertent violations. Emerald said, "The fine is fair. I'm just glad this matter is resolved."

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